

## DATA STORAGE SERVICE FOR USERS OF DATA COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

### Abstract of the Disclosure

5 The presently contemplated file transfer service, for users of data  
communication networks like the Internet, operates as agent of respective subscribing  
clients to retrieve and store data files that clients are unable to instantly download to  
workstations currently used by them. Files stored by the transfer service are made  
available to respective clients when the latter are able to receive them. In one  
application of this, a client is unable to instantly download a large file because the  
computer workstation the client is then using operates at a low speed unsuited for that  
purpose. In other applications, the client is unable to download a file because the  
10 client's workstation is behind a firewall that effectively blocks that action. In these  
applications, the transfer service is useful to effectively either circumvent restrictions of  
the firewall, or to deliver the file to the client at a workstation that is not behind the  
firewall. The contemplated service retrieves and stores data files at source locations  
designated by client workstations, and confirms completion of these operations to the  
client (e.g. via an e-mail message). When the client is at a workstation able to receive  
15 files stored by the service, the client connects to the service and requests transmittal of  
respective files. Upon authenticating the client's identity and subscription, the transfer  
service makes the file accessible to the requesting client. A group of clients may use a  
single subscription to effectively allow any member of the group to initiate a file retrieval  
and storage operation and/or to request access to a previously retrieved and stored  
20 file.